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A
DISCOURSE
ON THE
USE of the PEN.

CONTAINING

Observations on *WRITING* in General:

THE

Proper Posture in Sitting to *WRITE*:

Rules for choosing *QUILS*, and making of *PENS*
for different Hands, (proving that the common
Methods of sitting to write, and nibbing the Pen,
obstruct the Freedom of Writing):

With whatever else may tend to *Perfection* in
that *ART*.

Necessary not only for *Teachers* of *Writing*, but
for all *Persons* concerned, in *Business*.

To which are added,

Two Alphabetical Sets of Copies suited to a Quarto
Writing-Book, on the *RULE* of *LIFE*, and Moral
DEFINITIONS.

By *WILLIAM LEEKEY*,
Writing-Master.

LONDON: Printed for *M. Cooper*, at the
Globe in *Paternoster-Row*.

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R. WILLIAM LEECH

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Printed for M. Cooper, at the
Office in Pall-mall, near
St. James's Palace.

1825

DISCOURSE, &c.

GUIDO PANCIROLLUS, in his Account of *memorable Things lost*, expresses himself thus; —
 “ The Invention of *Letters* is
 “ much controverted by *Authors*; it is com-
 “ monly supposed they were found out by
 “ the *Phœnicians*, which *Lucan* intimates
 “ in his third Book, when he sings,
 “ *Phœnicians that (if Fame we dare believe)*
 “ *To human Speech first Characters did give.*”

Whether these *Characters* were written, or how wrote; if *engraven, cut in Wood, &c.* is not the Business of this *Discourse* to treat of. *Writing* and *Engraving* seem to be very *antient*, as we find in Holy Writ, *Job* xix, 23, 24. “ *Oh that my Words were now*
 “ *written; Oh that they were printed in a*
 “ *Book! That they were graven with an*
 “ *Iron Pen and Lead, in the Rock for ever!*”

Thus we see that *Writing, Engraving, and Printing*, are no new *Inventions*: How these *Arts* were perform'd in *antient Times*, or their Difference with the *present*, is not rela-

tive to my *Design* ; which is chiefly to point out the two great *Difficulties* that *obstruct* our present *Writers*, and lay down *Rules* for the Ease of the *Writer*, which will tend to the Freedom of *Writing*.

There is no *Art* of more *Use*, or in *Esteem*, than modern *Writing*.—No *Art* of more *Use*, because no *Commerce* or *Business* can be carried on without it. Its *Usefulness* to those concerned in the *Law*, to such as have any *Naval* or *Military* Employments, also to the *Physician* and *Divine*, together with the Reputation it hath with all Persons, render it altogether needless to make any *Encomiums* on its *Use*, should I be better *qualified* than I am. It is *esteemed* not only for its *Use*, but for its *Beauty*, excelling all other *Arts* when *rightly* performed: I say it *excells*, being executed with so small an Instrument as the *Pen*, and at one single *Operation* ; for when after *Touches* are made, that *Letter* so *assisted* is not *wrote*, but *drawn*, *painted* or *patch'd*, and that additional *Assistance* takes away the very *Propriety* of *Writing*. Therefore, when performed as it *ought*, I know no one *Art* of such an exact *Proportion*, such other excellent *Qualities*, as in *Writing*, (which makes it not only *valued* for its *Use*, but for its *Freedom* and *Beauty*) that is performed with but one *Tool* and at one *Motion*, except the valuable *Art* of *Writing*,—and therefore *commands Esteem*.

The

The two great *Difficulties* that *obstruct* the Freedom of *Writing* is, the *Position* of your *Body* in *sitting*, and laying your *Book* or *Paper* before you; the other, making or *nibbing* your *Pen*. In this *Discourse* I shall not only point out the *Errors* the common and much approved *Methods* are liable to, but shall lay down such other *Rules* for the more easy *writing* a free Hand, as I daily *practice*, and am convinced of the *Certainty* by *Experience*. I would not have any *imagine* that I endeavour to *instruct* such as know little or nothing of *Writing*; my principal and main *View* is to remove those *Difficulties* and *Discouragements* out of the Way of such as have been *striving* and *endeavouring* in the *Dark*, either thro' wrong *Instructions*, false *Ideas*, or erroneous *Practice*. Nothing is more *true* than that there are many Persons who would be *thought*, and by many are esteemed good *Writers*, yet are so *perplexed* at making their *Pens*, that they are *obliged* to the Assistance of common *Pen-cutters*, few of whom, if any, know how to *write*, and therefore it is simply *impossible* they should be capable of making good *Pens* with *Certainty*.

In order to make a good *Pen*, you must provide a good *Knife*; or if you have two, one for the *shaping*, the other for *nibbing*, you will find the *Benefit*. I find that the *Blade*, if *strong* and *large*, takes off the *Nib* the *cleaner*, the *Weight* of the *Blade* requir-

ing less *Pressure* : The *Edge* also ought to be *strait*, and not too *keen*; the round-pointed *Blades* hinder *nibbing* the *Pen square*, and if too *keen*, when *nibbing* a strong *Pen*, the *Edge* is apt to turn.

The next thing is the Choice of *Quils*, and of these there are from *several Counties* great *Quantities* brought to *LONDON*, as from *Yorksire, Shropshire, Lincolnshire, &c.* the former of which are the *best*, by reason of their *Clearness* and *Strength*. To make these natural *Quils* of more *Use*, there are two ways of *manufacturing* them, call'd *dutching* and *clarifying*; the first is done by the help of *Fire*; the other by *boiling* them in *Water*, and then *clearing* them over a *Charcoal Fire*, or putting them into *hot Sand*. Here it may not be amiss to remove a *Mistake* some good *Writers* labour under, who think these *Pens* are boiled in *Oil*; whereas if they were *boiled* in *Oil*, the *Ink* could never *flow* from *them* : On the other *hand*, this Method of *clarifying* them is to take out that *Oily Matter* that is natural to raw *Quils*, which causes a *spungy Nib* after very little *Writing*. These *Quils* so *manufactured* are of longer *Duration* than raw *Quils*, and useful to such who dispatch *Business* : They have also a better look; but are, nevertheless, not so *necessary* for *Writing-Schools* as a natural *Quil*, after it is of some *Age* and kept very dry, so that the *Oily Matter* before spoken of is *dried away*, it
having

having not that *Brittleness* as when it is *dutch'd* or *clarify'd* (especially if so *manufactured* by an *unskilful* Person) therefore more fit to write set *Lines*, and indeed, if not *scraped* too much over the *Slit*, is much easier to make. But this is what may be called a Branch of other Peoples *Business*; so I shall not here trouble my *Readers* with their *Secrets*, this being *sufficient* to my *Purpose*.

I observed before, I did not write for *those* who were *totally* unacquainted with *Writing*; so I shall avoid *directing* how to hold the *Quil* the *Knife*, and the like, for I conclude such for whom I *write* have been *taught* that already. Neither shall I, when I come to treat of *Writing*, concern myself about the *Slope* of the *Desk*, how to *sit* to the *Light*, &c. thinking those *Directions* entirely *useless* and *unnecessary*; tho' I am very sure, the *Master* who writes upon a flat *Table* has the Advantage of *him* who writes upon an extraordinary *slope Desk*, because the *Ink* is apt to RECOIL; consequently, if the *flowing* of the *Ink* is thereby *impeded*, the Freedom and Beauty of the *Letter*, or Command of Hand, is very much *hindered*, nor will it appear with its proper *Sprightliness* as it should.

Thus being provided with *Knife*, *Quils*, and *Writing Table* or *Desk*, your *Paper* and *Ink* being such as you may write on the one,
being

being neither too *course* nor of too *stiff a Nature*; the other, that you may *write* with, and that with *Pleasure*, which is very difficult, if the *Ink* be too thin, or of too *gummy a Nature*: If made with *Ink-Powder* it is apt sometimes not to *mix* well with the *Water*, for want of some other *Ingredient* to *cement* them, as it were. *Ink* thus made is very often *sandy*, which getting into the *Nib*, not only spoils the *Pen*, but the *Writing* looks of divers *Colours*, and the leading *Strokes course*. These are Things, tho' something *relative* to this *Discourse*, I shall not enlarge upon, for the *Reason* before-mention'd--supposing my Reader a *Writer*; neither shall I trouble him with my *Thoughts of Writing* in particular, or in its several *Branches*, whether in the *Writing-Schools*, *Business*, or the *Law*, but only speak to *Writing* in general,—that being necessary before I treat of the two principal Parts of my Design, viz. *Sitting to write*, and *making the Pen*.

Of

O F
W R I T I N G

In General.

TH E Art of *Writing* is a *Representation* of our *Words*. To attain *Perfection* in that *Art*, the *HEAD* must be fully informed of what the *Hand* ought to do; not informed with *vain* and *trifling Fancies* and *stragling Strokes*, which are used by some as though they were of *Ornament*, but of a just *Proportion* of the *Characters*; and this *Information* is acquired by getting an exact *Idea* of the *Hand* you intend to be *Master* of. In few Words, *Writing* is performed at once, with one *Operation* of the *PEN*.

That *Writer* who endeavours to mend his *Writing* by *patching* or *filling up*, adding *Strength*, or any other *Assistance*, forfeits his *Character* as a *Writer*, and may be more properly, and with greater *Propriety*, called a *Letter Dauber*. I am not against *Writing* having its just and proper *Embellishments*, but this ought to be very *carefully* and *judi-*
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ciously

ciously done; and *requires* no little *Study* and *Application* to dispose it *right*. In such a trifling *Assistance* as placing a *Dot* at the *Tail* or *Head* of any *open Letter*, some have done it so *clumsy* that it hath even *spoiled* the *Beauty* of the *Letter*; instead of *mending*, they have *marred* that which was good without *Assistance*.

To *write* well, is to *write* *correct*: It matters not what *Slope* the *Writing* is of, how wide, or how narrow, so that it be all alike. Should you write a *Line* after the same *Mode* as was in *vogue* 40 or 50 Years ago, if the *Writer* so designed, he shews himself a *Master* of the *Art*; and indeed I must acknowledge, I think that *Writing* which is the most *legible* the *best*: The *Design* of *Writing* is to convey your *Ideas*, therefore the plainer the *Character*, the more it is likely to strike the *Eye*, and consequently sooner make a proper *Impression*. In a late *Performance*, called the *UNIVERSAL PENMAN*, there is a Number of *Writing Masters* who have *endeavoured* to make the *Art* as *excellent* in that way as is possible; and though some of those *Masters* had establish'd *Characters*, either by being known to the *World* by their *Performances*, or by serving a kind of *Apprenticeship* to those who had already made themselves known either by *publishing* or *teaching*; yet the *Engraver*

of that *able Performance* is not *unsensible* that there are some *Pieces* from others (till then *obscure Persons*) that have nothing more to *recommend* them than that they are all of a *piece*, for the *Correctness* of the *Writing* is *sufficient* to speak its *Worth*, without the *Assistance* of *Ornament*, or *Command* of *Hand*.

To write a good *Line*, or a good *Piece* of *Writing*, supposing a four or a six *Line Piece*, you are *carefully* to have *Regard* that you *hold on* and *end* as you *begin* : This, and this *only*, is the *hardest* Part of *Writing* for the *Graver*; and I venture to *affirm* that *Writing*, for the *Engraver* to *execute* his *Art* in a *workman-like* manner, is the most *difficult* Part of *Writing* whatever. A *Man* who is an *excellent Engraver*, matters nothing more than a due *Proportion*, and a regular *Slope*, occasioned by that *Proportion*: I mean all those *Letters* depending on an *m* or *n* of an equal *Width*, the *Turns* as agreeable as is *possible* for the *Hand* to *perform*, which will cause the said *Proportion*; all the *Ovals*, and those *Letters* depending on an *Oval*, as *nigh alike* as you can; the *Tops* and *Bottoms* of a *Height* and *Length* : Therefore I say, if the *Writing* be *wide* or *narrow*, *upright* or *slope*, more or less, the *Equality* of such *Writing* will *strike the Eye*, and have nothing to *discommend* it but the *Prejudice* and ill
B 2
Nature

Nature of such who cannot perform after so just a manner, and therefore are determined to descry it, and substitute, in the room of Writing, their own incorrect Performances. Equal Width and equal Height is the main Business of Writing, for an Engraver to engrave from ; the Beauty of the Turns, by having a fine leading or hair Stroke, is sometimes detrimental to the taking off the Writing to the Plate, especially if they are not proportionable, and tho' not seen so easy with the naked Eye, yet after engraved and printed will shew their Deformity. I mention this, because I know those who have strove to write neat for the Purpose abovenamed, yet with Care and Pains could not write a single Line for that Use, tho' their Writing, to the Eye of indifferent Judges, would look very agreeable,—and this owing only to the want of Correctness.

There are some very good Writers that spoil the Beauty of their Labour by an over Fondness for Ornament : After they have wrote a good Piece, or sometimes a single Word, will dress and smother it in Flourishes. When a Piece of Writing is thus hid, the Design of it is lost, by what they put for Embellishment, striking the Eye before the Writing. Such Persons as these, tho' they write well, and have a good Command of Hand, yet would they shew these separately would

would find the *Benefit* of it. A good *Word* or *Piece of Writing* will *command*, as it were, the *Attention* of a *judicious Judge*, without *Assistance*. It is possible for the best-made *Man* in the *World* to be *spoiled* in his *Shape*, to outward *Appearance*, by the *Help* of his *Taylor*, &c. or for the finest *Bird* to be hid in a *Bush*. This has been the *Case* in *dressing* many a good *Letter*.

of

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Sitting to WRITE, &c.

IT is surprizing, that the common *Method* of sitting to *write* hath not been *alter'd* in the *Writing-Schools*, when it is well known that there are Numbers of *Persons* who have had a *Writing Education*, and yet as soon as they become somewhat weaned from their *School Instructions*, and are initiated into real *Business*, they *fall*, as it were, insensibly into what most *Teachers* call *Error*; and so soon as they have in *reality* fallen from their *first Instructions*, from *stiff, awkward* and *lame Writers*, they become exceeding good *Clerks*, write *free*, dispatch *Business* with *Neatness* and *Correctness*. This I speak not upon *Trust*, but *experimentally*, and of my own *Knowledge*. Altho' what I shall lay down as a fundamental *Truth*, is an approv'd *Error*; and as I *freely* own I *differ* from most, if not *all*, the *Writing-Masters*, especially those who are called *REGULARLY BRED*, yet I differ upon good *Reasons*, *Practice* and *Experience*. I hope to make good my following *Method* to the *Satisfaction* of those

those who will *attentively* read and make
TRIAL.

I begin with *sitting* to write, before the
using or making the PEN, it being *necessary*
to know how to *sit*, as the *Sequel* will ap-
pear.

Directions for Sitting, &c.

LET your Seat be so high as that you may
sit easy, without either your Legs hanging,
or throwing them from you : Your Desk or
Table about the Height of your Middle.—
Thus seated, lay your Book or Paper awry ;
that is, instead of being strait before you, let
it incline towards your left Arm or Side ;
the more it inclines, the more your Slope will
be. If you write upright, then lay your Book
or Paper even before you. Fix your Body
directly before your Desk or Table, with both
right and left Elbows on it, as the general
Method of Teaching is that your left Arm
should be.

Thus seated, and your Book, &c. before
you, you may write with all the *Freedom*
and *Ease* you desire: No nervous *Flutter-*
ings, *Contractions*, *Numbness*, and *Stiffness*,
that too frequently *sitting* with the left Side
towards the Desk, and leaning the Stress of
your

your *Body* upon your left *Arm* occasions, will attend you. The above *Method* will suit all *Sizes* and both *Sexes*; the *Fat* and the *Lean*, the *Tall* or the *Short*, Men of *bulky Size*, and *Ladies* laced in their *Stays*, will all find this *Method* *easy* and *practicable*; they will write without *Fatigue*, with a great deal of *Freedom*: What is *more*! they will write even without *LEADING-STRINGS*, either *single* or *slope* Lines, or any other *Assistance* whatever.

This *Position* of the *Body* I know may seem a little strange at the first trying. I shall first let my *Reader* know, that I have been conversant in *Writing*, both at *home* and *abroad*, for more than *twenty* Years, and have seen as *Variety* of *Writing*, and as many different *Writers* (perhaps) as any Man of my *Age*: I have wrote, at *Times*, no one more; yet 'till within about *seven* Years, I always found a great deal of *Difficulty* in writing *legible*, *free* and *correct*; but at last falling into this *Method*, with what I shall mention concerning the *nibbing* of the *PEN*, I venture to affirm that I write with *little* or no *Fatigue* at all, as *legible* as ever, with more *Freedom*, equally as *correct*, and with *Ease* or very *little* Pain, dispatch *Business* for *Hours* together, and that by this *Method* I now offer to the *PUBLICK*. I assert this not only to be *believed* barely upon my *Credit*,

Credit, but it is well known to many *Persons*: Some to whom I have communicated this *Method* are able and willing to testify the *Veracity* of this *Assertion*. Any *Person* that is grounded in the common *Practice* of *Writing*, and rivetted in *Opinion*, let him but **TRY**: If it should seem something difficult at first, all new *Things* are seemingly so, 'till made easy by *Use*: If he has been instructed in one *Form* or way of *Writing*, he must be but badly grounded, if, to try a new *Method*, he is afraid of putting his *Hand* out, as the **SCHOOL PHRASE** is:

All new *Inventions* require a particular *Explanation*: This I shall, in few Words, endeavour to *demonstrate*; supposing a *casual* Reader will not only read; but **TRY**, without the *Prejudices* of *Education*. Many has been the *Time* that I have seen *Persons* write in this *Posture* (and no doubt but others have) and I have asked them how they could write so, or rebuked them for it, telling them I was sure they were not taught so. If, in real *Business*, they have replied they could not write as they were taught, is not this a very *Answer* surprizing? And yet perhaps these very *Persons* write a better *Hand* for *Business* than the **MASTER** who taught them. The plain *Inconveniency* attending the common *Method* of sitting to write helps to illustrate my **RULE**; viz. There

There are very few but what find it *difficult* to write either *even*, or to *keep* a Line of an *exact* Heighth : The Reason of this is, because as your *Body* inclines to the *left* towards your *Desk*, you *write* from you, which causes you to *fall* in the *Evenness* if you *write* without *Lines* : If you *write* with them, unless you follow your *Writing*, it declines at the *End* of the Line, by *stretching* your *Hand*, and being from *directly* under your *EYE*. Should you move your *Body* after your *Writing* too far, your *Writing* will become larger at the *Close* of the *Line*.

The *Method* I have laid down, *remedies* these and all other *Inconveniencies* attending the common *POSTURE* in *Sitting*, and laying your *BOOK* or *PAPER*, to write ; for you have no Occasion to *stir* your *Body*, but *sit* at *Ease*, as if *sitting* in an *Elbow Chair* ; the *Fatigue* in *Writing* is lessen'd, by having both your *Arms* to ease you, laying an equal *Weight* on the *Table* or *Desk* to *support* your *BODY* ;—the right *Hand* directing the *PEN* towards the *Corner* of the *Paper*, and tho' it *rises*, it *rises* so *gradually*, that when you come to *lay* your *Paper* strait, your *Writing* is as even as if perform'd with *Lines*. When you have wrote your *full Length* of the *Stretch* of your *Fingers*, your *left Hand* is *employed* in *drawing* the *Paper* towards your *BODY*, and *pushing* it from
you

you when your *Line* is finished, to begin again.

The *Writers* of the *Law Hands* are only excepted (if any) from this *Method* of *Writing*, and they but in *part*; which shews the *Certainty* of my *Method*. Their *Writing*, especially *Engrossing*, is quite *upright*; now they always sit *strait*, and hold their *Elbows* out, as I have described, their *Parchment* being *even* before them. This *POSITION* of *Body* and *Parchment* naturally causes them to draw the *PEN* strait towards their *Bodies*, and as the *Parchment* lies, obliges them to write *perpendicular*; — consequently, if the *Paper* or *Book* is laid *awry* or *uneven*, inclining towards your *left Side*, and drawing the *PEN* towards your *Body*, you have a *Slope* accordingly.

WRITING-MASTERS will find *Ease*, and acquire *Reputation*, by this way of *Teaching* to write, among the *FAIR SEX*, whose *Stays* and *Dress* are troublesome to them if they sit inclining their *left Side* to the *Desk*. Youth design'd for *Business* will write at *School* after the *manner* many of them *insensibly* fall into when they have left *School* for some time. I shall instance, that *Engravers* set in this *Position* the *Plate* laying on their *Sand-Bag*, as I say the *Book* or *Paper* ought to lay, seldom having it *even*, but when

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they look at what they have performed. Indeed there is this *Difference* between *Writing* and *Engraving*; the one is performed by drawing your PEN towards your *Body*; the other, by pushing the *Graver* from you; and the *Engraver* holds his *Graver* in the *Palm* of his *Hand*, his *right Arm* somewhat more *erected*; yet, nevertheless, he goes over the same *Strokes* that the PEN has already performed, whether *upright* or *slope*; the *Position* of his *Body* and the *Plate* the same as I have laid down for *Writing*: There is this *Agreement* between them, that however the *Instruments* or *Tools* held or used may differ, yet they both tend to the same *End*, and answer the same *Purpose*, by reason of the *Position* of the *Body*, &c.

I am sensible that this *Method* may be disadvantageous in placing Boys in common at *School*; they will be obliged to have much more *Room* in their *Forums*. To this I shall only answer, there are few new Things advanced, tho' calculated for general Good, but what meets with some particular *Exception*; and tho' this may be a seeming *Difficulty*, yet this *Method* of sitting to write, if it answers the *End* of writing free, the *Master* will find it worth his *While* to follow it. It is attended with an *Advantage* to such WRITING-MASTERS who are employed in Teaching abroad, where no such little *Difficulty* can arise

arise. Men of Business, whether in large or small Concerns, will quickly find the Benefit of it in the easy *Dispatch* of Business, which must be allowed is the principal Design of *Writing in General*. These few Observations are enough on the common way of *sitting* to write, and the *Attempt* I have made to demonstrate my *Method* to be plain, easy, and eligible to a moderate Capacity. I doubt not but they will find a favourable *Acceptance*, if I may be allowed to assert, that I know as good Clerks as any in London that write after this *Method*, with Success and to Satisfaction; which will corroborate what I have here advanced.

If it should be objected against by Geometrical Letter-Makers, or by the most eminent WRITING-MASTERS, I am constrained to say, that their Objections are a Proof of the Certainty of the *Method*. I have already observed it matters not of what Slope Writing is of, whether 58 or 60 Degrees; no one can write either Slope with Certainty without Lines, and then he is not only fatigued with making his Letters of an equal Distance and Width, but he is cramped and perplexed to keep a Consistency with his Geometrical Lines, which in some measure hinders the Freedom, and altogether spoils the Beauty of Writing. And for those who would take upon them to be the most eminent
of

of the *Profession* of *Writing-Masters*, I can but to *them* say, I *presume* they will not take from me the *Character* of a *WRITER*, then consequently I am a sort of a *Judge*; and therefore I have freely deliver'd my *Opinion* of the *Matter*: Observing further, that I *think* that as there are few *Writing-Masters* who follow this *common Method* that have arrived to be much *superior* than *myself*, I believe the *Reason* is, because the *general Method of Instructing* is *WRONG*.

How

How to make the P E N.

THE Manufactured Quils, before spoken of, have no need of *scraping* to make them *slit* clear, as *raw* Quils have; and they are apt to *split* too high, unless prevented by placing your *Thumb* at the *Height* you would have the *Slit* to stop. The *Cheeks* are not to be made *strong* in a *weak* Quil, nor *weak* in a *strong* one; tho' the main *Judgment* lies in the *sitting* and *nibbing*. If the Quil is *weak*, the *Slit* must be the *shorter*; if *strong*, it matters not how *long*, the *Cheeks* being made in *proportion*: So that if used by an *obedient Hand*, it hath a *Spring*, and *opens* and *shuts* at *pleasure*, as is evident in *Striking*, or *Command* of *Hand*. In order to make a good PEN, Care must be taken that the *Slit* is not *forced* so *hard* as to *gape* or *open*; neither should the *Nib* be bent inwards; both these *Failings* tending to the same *bad End*: The *first* causes the *Pen* not to *cast* the *Ink*; the other, after very little *Use*, occasions a double *Stroke*; and when the *Nib* is recovered from that *forced Strain*, the *Slit* opens not much *unlike* that which was *forced* too much. The *Slit* should be
always

always *easy* and *clear*, so that when *nibbed* as I shall *shew*, you may *write* with the *Ease* and *Freedom* of a MASTER of WRITING.

YOUR PEN being made all but *nibbing*, and indeed there is the great *Error* that most *Persons* are *guilty* of, but more especially WRITING-MASTERS, who go upon a *Maxim* laid down by some of the Profession who were in *Esteem* thirty Years ago. If I *differ* from them in this Particular, I hope to *demonstrate* that I have *Reason* to be of another *Opinion*, and I *doubt not* but I shall *succeed*.

I shall *instance*, in giving you my way of making the PEN to *write* the *Round Hands*; which is,

MAKE each Cheek, or Side of the Slit, as equal as possible, having a *strait-bladed Knife*: Nib it quite even, or square; your Slit being long or short, according to the *Strength* of your *Quil*, and the ordinary *Pressure* you use in *Writing*.

Tho' this may be contrary to the *Methods* commonly *practised*, if I have the *Success* to point out the *Errors* any other way of *nibbing* the Pen is liable to, then I shall have little to do to speak in behalf of the
above

above Method of nibbing the Pen ; which Pen when so nibbed, and the Position of the Body, as before laid down, is duly observed, *Writing* will find an *easier* and *better* Success to those who now think it a *Burthen* and a *Fatigue* to write.

The common *Practice* of *nibbing* the PEN is, that the *Part* next your *Hand* be something the *narrowest* and *shortest*. Should the *Nib* in that Part be the *narrowest*, it must of course be the *weakest* : If the *shortest*, the other Part of the *Nib* must touch the *Paper* before it, and then you may as well have no *Slit* at all ; but I suppose by *shortest* is meant, that it is on a sort of *Slant* from the other Part of the *Nib* ; and this indeed cannot be *avoided* any other way than by *carefully* holding the *Penknife* with the Point of the *Blade* on a *Line* with the *Handle* ; for when it seems to *point* from you, the off Part of the *Nib* is upon a *Slant* from the *inner* ; so that as the PEN is *reversed* when you *write*, the *Slant* Part of the *Nib* lies next your *Hand* : The *inner* Part of the *Nib* being *longest*, causes a sort of *Nub* at the Turn of the *Letter*, a *Swelling* or *jetting* out, because that *Part* of the *Nib* next your *Hand* being on a *slant*, the other *first* touches the *Paper*, and consequently *leaves* a *Mark* at the outside of the *Turn*, when the *inner* Part of the *Nib* has performed the leading

D

Stroke.

Stroke. If the Hand is not *obedient*, the long Part of the *Nib* follows the *short*, and then the leading *Stroke* appears *thick* and *clumsy*, and as it were *sandy* and *speckled*. This has been the Fault of many a *correct Writer*.

Should you *nib* your *PEN* to write the *Round Hands* with the Part of the *Nib* next your Hand the *longest*, it has its *Difficulty*, for there will certainly be a *Break* at the same Part of the *Turn* where I have described the *Nub* to be, which is occasioned by turning your *Hand*, or leaving off to perform the *leading Stroke*; the outward Part of the *Nib* being *longest*, if not somewhat *eased*, would cause a *splashing* of the *Ink*. The *inner* Part of the *Nib* being the *shortest*, must leave the *Paper* the *soonest*; when the *longest*, the *Difficulty* hath been observed already. The outmost Part of the *Nib*, by being *longest*, may make the *leading Stroke* fine; but then it will appear like a *Scratch*; that Part of the *Nib* soon worn out, and then become *spungy*.

If these *Objections* are *true*, there is no *Writer* whatever that sees these *Errors* in a *Piece* of *Writing*, but must *allow* them. Then there can be but *one* other way, which must be by *nibbing* the *PEN* square; for if the *off* Part of the *Nib*, or the *near*, is
either

either *longer* or *shorter*, 'twill subject *Writing* to the *Difficulties* I have mention'd.

I have *nothing* to say to *nibbing* the *Pen* square further, than that as no other *Method* will answer the Purpose of *Writing* without obstructing *free Writing*, *nibbing* the *PEN* square must be the only *true Method*.

In order to write the *Running Hand*, or the *Hand* for *Business*, the *Method* of *nibbing* is the same, as to being *even*, but not so *square*, and the *Cheeks* something stronger than in the *Round Hands*, and not so much *slant* taken off,—letting the *Back* of the *Knife* incline towards you, which causes the *Nib* to be of a *hollow Round*, and in your *Writing* causes a sort of *half-full* at the *Tails* or *free Turns*, which indeed may be more visible by striking after the *Dutch Command*, and ornamenting *German-Text Letters*,—this sort of *PEN* being very proper for those *Purposes*.

To write the *Law Hands*, which (by the way) are very few, and very little practised since the *Act* of *Parliament* for rendering all *Proceedings* in *English* hath took Place; the *PEN*, however, to write those *Hands*, is *nibbed* stronger than the way above laid down; *shorter* in the *Slit*, and being held almost upright, the inner Part of the *Nib* rather

ther slanting from the *off*, *inclining* towards your Body, cuts your *Fulls square*, and makes your *back Strokes* without any manner of *Assistance* whatever.

Thus, in this small *DISCOURSE*, I have laid down what I *think* are the *very* and *only* Inconveniencies that *hinder* a *willing* Person from *writing* a *free*, *legible* and *correct* Hand ;—ERRORS that were implanted by their first *Instructors*,—so, of *course*, harder to be *removed* from them ; but I am *sensible* there are many *Persons* who would *willingly* extricate *themselves* from the *Difficulties* they *labour* under, which, as it were, *compel* them to *write* in a *stiff*, *awkward* manner. Others there are who are so *attached* to *Error*, that their *Pride* in *remaining* so is not *worth* the *Observation* of any *one* who *writes* for *publick* Good. And therefore I offer this *Discourse* to the *Consideration* of those *impartial Persons* who are *willing* to *TRY* if what I have *advanced* be *true* and *practicable*.

Should any *one* find me *erroneous* in any of my *Assertions*, I shall not only *acknowledge* my *Conviction* to the *World*, but *thankfully esteem* that Person as my *Friend*, and not only *mine*, but my *Readers*. But
I must

I must beg leave to *observe*, that it is not every one that *says* I have *advanced* wrong Things ; but *he* is to be *believed* who can *give* more *rational* Reasons to the *contrary* of my *Assertions*, than I have in *Vindication* of them, of which every *considerate* MAN is a *competent* Judge.

End of the Discourse.



THE
RULE of LIFE.

A Man's Actions determine his Fortune.
 Be slow in resolving, and quick in executing.

Consideration secures us from Repentance.
 Do willingly that which cannot be avoided,
 Every Action should have its proper End.
 Fear to do what begets Fear when done.
 Grace below conducts unto Glory above.
 Hope is the true Cordial of human Life.
 Innocence is better than the strongest Armour,
 Keep Peace, if you would enjoy Plenty.
 Live so as not to be surprized by Death.
 Memory is a Blessing attended by Judgment.
 Necessity is too often the Mother of Shame.
 Obey punctually, if you would obtain Command.
 Patience, tho' it be a slow Remedy, is sure.
 Quiet is a much surer Possession than Fame.
 Receive thankfully what Providence bestows.
 Silence is the best Prologue to wise Speech.
 Time and Truth will compass all good Ends.
 Virtue in Adversity will command Applause.
 Unity is a better Guard than military Force.
 Wealth is a Blessing that depends on Use.
Xantippe's Humour taught *Socrates* Patience.
 Youth is Man's hot Fit, Age his cold one.
 Zeal, like Fire, must be kept in Subjection.

DEFINITIONS.

A Lacrity is Obedience in good Humour.
 Beneficence is the Imitation of Divinity.
 Clemency is Justice without Rage.
 Despair flows from Fear without Bounds.
 Experience is the Treasure of Examples.
 Fame is the Report of virtuous Actions.
 Gratitude is an active Memory.
 Happiness is but the Effect of Content.
 Integrity arises from the Love of Good.
 Knowledge is the Wealth of the Mind.
 Learning is the Spoil of other Mens Labours.
 Melancholy is considerate Grief.
 Necessity may be felt, but not understood.
 Opinion is what Man takes for Truth.
 Patience is right Reason in Suffering.
 Quality is tried by Virtue's Touchstone.
 Reason is a Ray of the Divinity.
 Stupidity is the Palsey of the Mind.
 Tranquility arises from the Sense of Safety.
 Vigilance is a waking Attention.
 Uneasiness is the Fever of the Mind.
 Wisdom is the Application of Knowledge.
Xenophon's Wit recorded his Valour.
 Youths Follies speak the Temper of the Man.

FINIS.

DEFINITION

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